

REMARKS

The Office Action asserts that claims 1-55 are pending. Although claims 56-73 were previously noted as being withdrawn, Applicant is not presently aware of these claims being canceled. However, in this response Applicant now cancels, or confirms any previous action to cancel, claims 56-73.

Claims 13 and 16-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Plowman et al. (U.S. Pat. 5,654,109). Claims 14 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Plowman et al. (U.S. Pat. 5,654,109). Claims 13-23 have been canceled in this response.

Applicant is not conceding in this application that the canceled claims are not patentable over the art cited by the Examiner, as the claim cancellations are being made only to facilitate expeditious prosecution of the allowable subject matter noted by the examiner. Applicant respectfully reserves the right to pursue these and other claims in one or more continuation and/or divisional patent applications.

The only claims that remain pending, claims 1-12 and 24-55, have been stated as being allowed. Accordingly, the Applicant believes that the application is in condition for allowance.

Applicant believes this reply is fully responsive to all outstanding issues. If this is incorrect, or other issues arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned. In the event there are additional charges in connection with the filing of this Response, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the Deposit Account No. 500714/LYNN-0127 of the firm of the below-signed attorney in the amount of any necessary fee.

Respectfully submitted,

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